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Environment and sustainable development

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 98 (see A/56/561, para. 2). Action on the item as a whole was taken at the 22nd, 26th, 36th and 39th meetings, on 5 and 9 November and on 4 and 11 December 2001. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/56/SR.22, 26, 36 and 39).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/56/L.10 and A/C.2/56/L.48

2. At the 22nd meeting, on 5 November, the representative of Tajikistan, on behalf also of the Russian Federation, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Status of preparations for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003" (A/C.2/56/L.10). Armenia and Japan subsequently joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 55/196 of 20 December 2000, in which it proclaimed 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater,

"Recalling also chapter 18 of Agenda 21 relating to protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources, as well as chapter 13, entitled 'Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development', and taking into account that 80 per cent of accessible freshwater originates in mountains,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in nine parts, under the symbol A/56/561 and Add.1-8.



"Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 53/199 of 15 December 1998 on the proclamation of international years,

"Reaffirming the target of reducing by half, between 2000 and 2015, the proportion of people who lack sustainable access to adequate sources of affordable and safe water,

"Noting the preparations for the Third World Water Forum, to be held at Kyoto, Japan, in March 2003, and the elaboration of the World Water Development Report,

"Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of preparations for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003,

"1. Welcomes the activities undertaken by Governments, United Nations organizations, especially those represented on the Subcommittee on Water Resources of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, and non-governmental organizations in preparation for the observance of the International Year of Freshwater, especially as regards awareness-raising, and encourages them to continue and expand their efforts;

"2. Encourages all States, the United Nations system and other actors to take advantage of the International Year of Freshwater to raise awareness of the strategic importance of achieving sustainable development and use of the freshwater resources of the world, which are essential for satisfying basic human needs, health and food production, economic and social development and the preservation of ecosystems, and to assign high priority to the formulation and implementation of action-oriented policies and programmes for the sustainable use of freshwater for social and economic purposes;

"3. Also encourages all States, national and international organizations, major groups and the private sector to support local, national and international programmes and projects for the International Year of Freshwater, inter alia, through voluntary contributions;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session an interim report on the activities undertaken in preparation for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003."

3. At the 36th meeting, on 4 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Dharmansjah Djumala (Indonesia), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Status of preparations for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003" (A/C.2/56/L.48), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.10.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.48 (see para. 12, draft resolution I).

5. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Tajikistan made a statement (see A/C.2/56/SR.36).

6. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.48, draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.10 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/56/L.20 and A/C.2/56/L.65

7. At the 26th meeting, on 9 November, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-first session" (A/C.2/56/L.20), which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, by which it decided to establish the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme,

"Recalling also its resolution 55/200 of 20 December 2000 on the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme,

"Recalling further the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

"Taking note of the progress being made by the United Nations Environment Programme in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-first session;

"2. Welcomes the efforts already made to realize the objectives of the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme, supports the early and full implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999, and requests that the report of the Environmental Management Group be made available to the Member States;

"3. Notes the ongoing process initiated by decision 21/21 of 9 February 2001 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on establishing an open-ended intergovernmental group of ministers or their representatives on international environmental governance, whose outcome will be submitted to the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development for consideration at its third session;

"4. Underlines the need for sufficient financial resources on a stable and predictable basis to ensure the full implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to consider, with a view to strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme, a substantial increase in the budgetary allocation for the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi in the United Nations regular budget for the biennium 2002-2003."

8. At the 39th meeting, on 11 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Dharmansjah Djumala (Indonesia), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its

twenty-first session" (A/C.2/56/L.65), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.20.

9. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.65 (see para. 12, draft resolution II).

10. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.65, draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.20 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

C. Documents relating to environment and sustainable development

11. At its 39th meeting, on 11 December, upon the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Secretary-General on products harmful to health and the environment (A/56/115-E/2001/92 and Corr.1) (see para. 13).

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

12. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I

Status of preparations for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/196 of 20 December 2000, in which it proclaimed 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater,

Also recalling the provisions of Agenda 21,¹ the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21² adopted at its nineteenth special session and decisions of the Economic and Social Council and those of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its sixth session³ relating to freshwater,

Further recalling its resolution 53/199 of 15 December 1998 on the proclamation of international years,

Reaffirming the goal of reducing by half, between 2000 and 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water,

Noting the efforts for the preparations for the Third World Water Forum, to be held in Japan in March 2003, and for the elaboration of the World Water Development Report,

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution I, annex II.*

² Resolution S-19/2, annex.

³ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 9 (E/1998/29).*

*Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of preparations for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003,*⁴

1. *Welcomes* the activities undertaken by States, the United Nations Secretariat, organizations of the United Nations system that are engaged in inter-agency work related to freshwater and major groups in preparation for the observance of the International Year of Freshwater, and encourages them to continue their efforts;

2. *Encourages* all Member States, the United Nations system and major groups to take advantage of the International Year of Freshwater, 2003, to raise awareness of the essential importance of freshwater resources for satisfying basic human needs, health and food production and the preservation of ecosystems, as well as for economic and social development in general, and to promote action at the local, national, regional and international levels, and in this context calls for high priority to be given to the serious freshwater problems facing many regions, especially in the developing countries;

3. *Also encourages* all States, relevant international organizations and major groups to support activities related to the International Year of Freshwater, inter alia, through voluntary contributions;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session an interim report on the activities undertaken in preparation for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003.

Draft resolution II

Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-first session

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, by which it decided to establish the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recalling also its resolution 55/200 of 20 December 2000 on the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recalling further the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme⁵ and the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁶

Taking note with appreciation of the progress being made by the United Nations Environment Programme in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

⁴ A/56/189.

⁵ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/52/25), annex, decision 19/1, annex.*

⁶ See resolution 55/2.

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-first session;⁷

2. *Welcomes* the efforts already made to realize the objectives of the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme,⁵ supports the early and full implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999, and requests that the reports on the work of the Environmental Management Group be made available to the Member States and members of specialized agencies;

3. *Reiterates* the invitation to the international environmental governance process initiated by decision 21/21 of 9 February 2001 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to submit its progress report to the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development at its second session, to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, from 28 January to 8 February 2002, and to submit the final results to the Committee at its third session, to be held from 25 March to 5 April 2002, so that it may be fully considered in the preparatory process, and notes with interest the ongoing work of the open-ended intergovernmental group of ministers or their representatives on international environmental governance with respect to the comprehensive policy-oriented assessment of existing institutional weaknesses, as well as future needs and options for strengthened international environmental governance;

4. *Underlines* the need for sufficient financial resources on a stable and predictable basis to ensure the full implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme and, within this context, notes ongoing related deliberations;

5. *Notes* the proposal of the Secretary-General to increase United Nations funding for the cost of servicing the United Nations Environment Programme secretariat and the Governing Council from the regular budget;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under continuous review and to make proposals as needed in the context of the United Nations regular budget, with a view to strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi.

* * *

13. The Second Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the Secretary-General on products harmful to health and the environment

The General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on products harmful to health and the environment.⁸

⁷ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/56/25).

⁸ A/56/115-E/2001/92 and Corr.1.